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International conflict spooks Davos Forum

PAN PYLAS
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Following a year marked by the conflict in Ukraine and the rise of the Islamic State, geopolitical issues are considered to be the biggest threat to global stability over the coming decade, according to experts polled by the World Economic Forum.

In its 2015 Global Risks Report, published Thursday, the WEF found "interstate conflict with regional consequences" to be the top risk facing the world, ahead of extreme weather, the spread of infectious diseases, climate change and sky-high youth unemployment levels in some parts of the world.

"Twenty-five years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the world again faces the risk of major conflict between states," said Margareta Drzeniek-Hanouz, WEF's lead economist.

She said the means to wage such conflict are broader than ever, whether through cyberattack, competition for resources or sanctions and other economic tools.

"Addressing all these possible triggers and seeking to return the world to a path of partnership, rather than competition, should be a priority for leaders as we enter 2015," she said.

The report, now in its 10th year, helps set the tone for discussions at the annual WEF gathering in the Swiss ski resort of Davos, which starts next week.

Its findings show a marked change from the recent past. Geopolitical concerns have been largely absent from the WEF's list of top risks for the past half-decade. □

Belgium police kill 2 in anti-terror raid

RAF CASERT
FRANK AUGSTEIN
Associated Press

VERVIERS, Belgium (AP)

— Belgian security forces killed two terror suspects with links to Syria in a fierce shootout in the eastern city of Verviers on Thursday and arrested another, foiling a major and imminent attack against police buildings, authorities said.

The raid came amid an international hunt for possible accomplices to attackers who killed 17 people in France last week before being shot dead by police. Those attacks, by men claiming allegiance to the Islamic State group in Syria and al-Qaida in Yemen, have raised fears around Europe of more attacks.

Belgian federal magistrate Eric Van der Sypt said in Brussels that there was no link at this stage between the Paris attacks and the Belgian operation, which he said is the result of an investigation that has been underway for a few weeks.

The suspects immediately opened fire on police when they closed in on them near the city's train station, he said. There was an intense firefight for several minutes on an upper level of a building in Verviers where the raid took place, which appears to be residential.

"These were extremely well-armed men" with automatic weapons, Van der Sypt said. Police buildings were the target of an attack expected within hours or days, he said.

"We still expect a number of arrests," he said. No police were wounded or killed in the firefight, which occurred at the height of rush hour in a crowded neighborhood. Verviers, a former industrial town with about 56,000 residents including a large immigrant commu-

nity, is about 125 kilometers (80 miles) southeast of the capital, Brussels.

The magistrate said more anti-terrorist raids were underway in the Brussels region, adding that Belgium's terror alert level was raised to its second-highest level. The operation was part of an investigation into extremists returning from Syria,

in a Paris kosher market last week.

The man arrested in Belgium "claims that he wanted to buy a car from the wife of Coulibaly," Van der Sypt said. "At this moment this is the only link between what happened in Paris." Van der Sypt said that "of course, naturally" we are continuing the investiga-

by The Associated Press.

Several countries are now involved in the hunt for possible accomplices to Coulibaly and the two other gunmen in the French attacks.

In Spain, authorities said Coulibaly drove his common-law wife from France to Madrid on Dec. 31 and was with her until she took a



Belgian police officers guard a street in Verviers, Belgium, Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015. Belgian authorities say two people have been killed and one has been arrested during a shootout in an anti-terrorist operation in the eastern city of Verviers. (AP Photo/Geert Vanden Wijngaert)

authorities said.

Witnesses speaking on Belgium's RTBF radio described a series of explosions followed by rapid fire at the center of Verviers, near a bakery and in the neighborhood of the train station. Video posted online of what appeared to be the raid showed a dark view of a building amid blasts, gunshots and sirens, and a fire with smoke billowing up.

Earlier Thursday, Belgian authorities said they are looking into possible links between a man they arrested in the southern city of Charleroi for illegal trade in weapons and Amedy Coulibaly, who prosecutors say killed four people

tion.

At first, the man came to police himself claiming there had been contact with Coulibaly's common law wife regarding the car, but he was arrested following a search on his premises when enough indications of illegal weapons trade were found.

A Belgian connection figured in a 2010 French criminal investigation into a foiled terrorist plot in which Coulibaly was one of the convicted co-conspirators. The plotters included a Brussels area contact who was supposed to furnish both weapons and ammunition, according to French judicial documents obtained

Jan. 2 flight to Istanbul.

Spain's National Court said in a statement it was investigating what Coulibaly did in the country's capital with his wife, Hayat Boumeddiene, and a third person who wasn't identified but is suspected of helping Boumeddiene get from Turkey to Syria. France is on edge since last week's attacks, which began Jan. 7 at the satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo. The paper, repeatedly threatened for its caricatures of the Muslim Prophet Muhammad, buried several of its slain staff members Thursday even as it reprinted another weekly issue with Muhammad on its cover. □

Impossible Task? Climbers Come Out on Top

JOHN BRANCH

© 2015 New York Times

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK, Calif.

- On the 19th day of their climb, Tommy Caldwell and Kevin Jorgeson, both now bearded, reached the summit of El Capitan's Dawn Wall, completing a quest that included years of planning and that many considered the most challenging rock climb in the world.

Dozens of family members and friends greeted the climbers when they reached the top at 3:25 p.m. Wednesday on a cloudless day. After Caldwell hugged his wife and Jorgeson hugged his girlfriend, they were given sparkling wine. Jorgeson sprayed his. "That's the first shower you've had in a while," Caldwell's wife, Rebecca, said.

Jorgeson said of their feat: "I hope it inspires people to find their own Dawn Wall, if you will. We've been working on this thing a long time, slowly and surely. I think everyone has their own secret Dawn Wall to complete one day, and maybe they

can put this project in their own context."

It was the first ascent of the 3,000-foot Dawn Wall in a single expedition with the use of only hands and feet to pull climbers up - a challenge long considered impossible. Ropes were merely safety devices to break the occasional fall.

The entire climb was visible to anyone who wanted to watch through binoculars or long camera lenses while standing in a nearby meadow. And in recent days the assembly grew, some bringing camp chairs and nibbling on meats and cheeses, as history unfolded high above. From the wall, the climbers communicated through text messages and social media. Fans cheered success, and the climbers could hear it a moment later.

That was the magic that turned the quiet quest of two quiet men into a worldwide spectacle - an event both unimaginable and watchable. There was no mystery, but there was plenty of suspense.

"This is just amazing, re-

ally beautifully amazing, like a four-minute mile or a sub-two-hour marathon or Tiger Woods destroying every single major for a year or something, just off the charts awesome," Will Gadd, an elite mountain sports athlete, said in an email message Tuesday.

For Caldwell, 36, from Estes Park, Colorado, it was a goal that he could not shake since he first seriously conjured the idea a decade ago. It became his life-bending quest, a personal Moby-Dick. Could every inch of the blank, vertical face of the Dawn Wall be climbed with nothing more than bare hands and rubber-soled shoes? He was not sure. He never was, really, until Wednesday.

"From the outside it was starting to look like a Hemingway novel or something, an unresolvable quest," said Gadd, who has known Caldwell for many years.

Jorgeson, 30, from Santa Rosa, California, learned about Caldwell's vision in 2009, and asked if he want-



Tommy Caldwell, right, and Kevin Jorgeson in front of El Capitan's Dawn Wall in Yosemite National Park, Calif., Jan. 15, 2015. The climbers completed their 19-day free climb of the 3,000-foot Dawn Wall on Wednesday, making them the first to ever scale the wall using only hands and feet to pull themselves up. (Max Whittaker/The New York Times)

ed a partner. Each year since, the two have spent weeks and months, mostly in the fall and winter, attached to the Dawn Wall, scouting holds, practicing pitches, imagining how to do it all in one push from the valley floor.

El Capitan is the height of three Empire State Buildings stacked atop one another, but with many fewer, and smaller, things to hold on to on the way up. The climb was divided into 32 pitches, or sections, like waypoints on a dot-to-dot drawing. When one pitch was successfully navigated, the climbers stopped and prepared for the next. Much of the work was done in the cool of the evening, when hands would sweat less and the soles of their shoes had better grip.

Some pitches were well more than 100 feet straight up the rock, while others were sideways shuffles to connect two vertical pitches. One required a dyno,

a jump from one precarious hold to another. Falls were not unusual; Jorgeson needed seven days and 10 attempts to navigate the horizontal traverse of Pitch 15, unexpectedly slowing the expedition, which was blessed by an uncharacteristic stretch of dry weather. Few, if any, thought the Dawn Wall could be free climbed, using just strength and guile, not ropes and equipment, for upward propulsion. Earlier attempts by Caldwell and Jorgeson had been aborted by bad weather, injuries and an inability to get past certain pitches.

Not this time.

When Harding reached the top of the Dawn Wall in 1970, he was asked why he had done it and said, "Because we're insane!" Why did Caldwell and Jorgeson do it?

"For me, I love to dream big, and I love to find ways to be a bit of an explorer," Caldwell said. □

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Phase 2 of jury selection begins in Boston Marathon trial

DENISE LAVOIE

AP Legal Affairs Writer

BOSTON (AP) — Some of the first prospective jurors questioned in the federal death penalty trial of Boston Marathon bombing suspect Dzhokhar Tsarnaev illustrated the difficulty in finding people who say they have not formed an opinion on Tsarnaev's guilt and would be willing to sentence him to death.

As the second phase of jury selection began Thursday, the judge and attorneys heard from a man who said he believes Tsarnaev is guilty, another who said he could never impose the death penalty and a third whose wife treated bombing victims.

Tsarnaev, 21, is accused in the deadly 2013 marathon bombing. Twin bombs placed near the finish line killed three people and injured more than 260. He is also accused of killing an MIT police officer days after the bombing.

The first juror questioned said he believes Tsar-

naev is guilty and would sentence him to death. When pressed by Judge George O'Toole Jr. on whether he would be able to change his opinion after listening to evidence at the trial, the advertising account manager said, "I can't imagine any evidence that would change how I feel about what happened."

Tsarnaev listened to the man's comments impassively while surrounded by his lawyers at a large table. He had a neater, shorter haircut and a trimmed beard that contrasted to his appearance last week, when his hair appeared long and unkempt and his beard was scraggly. Another potential juror, a Catholic theologian, said he could not impose the death penalty under any circumstances. He later clarified that he could only impose the death penalty if there were no secure prisons to protect the public.

"There's no way in modern America today ...

that I am going to vote for the death penalty. I will not," he said.

Another man who was questioned said he works as a product manager at John Hancock, a major sponsor of the marathon. He also said his wife is an intensive care nurse who treated victims of the bombing. "It's tough, because it hit my wife hard," he said, when asked if his wife's experience would have an effect on his ability to be fair and impartial.

The judge did not immediately make it clear if those jurors were excused.

O'Toole has said he hopes to question about 40 prospective jurors individually each day. In initial instructions to a group of about 20 on Thursday morning, the judge took on a somber tone as he explained that the jury, after determining whether Tsarnaev is guilty or not guilty, would also decide whether he is executed or gets life in prison.

Seventeen of the 30



Department of Homeland Security police stand guard outside the federal courthouse in Boston, during jury selection in the trial of Boston Marathon bombing suspect Dzhokhar Tsarnaev.

(AP Photo/Michael Dwyer)

charges against Tsarnaev are capital crimes. A panel of 12 jurors and six alternates will be chosen. The judge has said he expects testimony in the trial to begin Jan. 26. Last week, more than

1,350 people filled out lengthy juror questionnaires. Many were expected to be excused based on their responses, but the court has not yet released that number. □

Teens face murder trial in killing of student

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Three Los Angeles teenagers were ordered Thursday to stand trial on murder charges in the slaying of a Chinese graduate student at the University of Southern California.

Judge M.L. Villar made the ruling in Los Angeles County Superior Court after hearing testimony from police and watching videos that a prosecutor said showed the fatal beating of Xinran Ji.

Ji, 24, was hit with a bat during an attempted robbery July 24 as he walked to his off-campus apartment after a late-night study session. He ran from his attackers, but they caught him a block away and continued the beating until he was on his knees.

Jonathan Del Carmen, 19, Alberto Ochoa, 17, and Alejandra Guerrero, 16, will be arraigned on the murder count Jan. 29. A fourth teen, Andrew Garcia, 19,

faces a preliminary hearing at a later date because of questions raised about his mental competency. All four pleaded not guilty after their arrests.

Deputy District Attorney John McKinney said the four were driving around looking for someone to rob when they saw Ji. One of the suspects said they targeted Ji because he looked Chinese and they thought he would have money.

The killing led to renewed concerns about the safety of USC's Chinese students, who make up about 40 percent of the school's large foreign population. Two other Chinese graduate students were murdered off campus in 2012. The school and Los Angeles police beefed up patrols after those killings and added surveillance cameras.

Video cameras in the area caught footage of Ji being

surrounded by the teens and struck with a bat. A second camera showed him running around the corner and then being caught a second time, where he was seriously beaten.

Ji managed to stagger home, trailing blood the whole way and was found dead in bed.

A couple hours after the beating, the four went to the beach, where Garcia, Ochoa, Guerrero allegedly robbed a tourist and attacked her friend.

Ochoa and Guerrero face trial in that attack on robbery, attempted robbery and assault with deadly weapon charges.

Del Carmen and Garcia could face the death penalty if convicted. Ochoa and Guerrero are charged as adults, but they only face up to life in prison without the possibility of parole if convicted because of their ages. □

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Off Target: Retailer to shut 133 Canada stores

**A. D'INNOCENZIO
M. CHAPMAN**

AP Business Writers

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Target is giving up on Canada. More than 17,600 employees will eventually lose their jobs when the U.S. discount retailer closes its 133 Canadian stores after only about two years to cut losses that went as high as a billion dollars a year.

The company didn't see how to stop the losses before at least 2021, Target

seemed like a no-brainer, because for years droves of Canadians crossed the border to shop at its U.S. stores.

But problems cropped up almost immediately when it opened more than 100 stores in the first year of its Canadian expansion. Shoppers complained of shortages of basic consumer goods and complained that prices were too high. They also didn't find the brands that they'd seen

"Shame on them for opening here with exorbitant prices compared to the U.S.," said Lauren Tinto, 35, of Toronto, who runs a store that sells blinds. "They think we're idiots or something." Cracking the Canadian retail market, about one-tenth the size of the U.S., looks simple. Target's difficulties show it's not. There are costly regulations and shoppers who compare prices religiously. There's also increasing



People arrive to shop at a Target store in Toronto on Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015. More than 17,600 Target employees will eventually lose their jobs when the U.S. discount retailer closes its 133 Canadian stores after only about two years to end financial losses that went as high as a billion dollars a year.

(AP Photo/Nathan Denette)

Corp. Chairman and CEO Brian Cornell said Thursday. Cornell said on Target's corporate blog that its Canadian arm was losing money every day.

The closing is Cornell's first major move since becoming CEO.

His predecessor, Gregg Steinhafel, was pushed out last May after a string of problems, from a massive data breach to woes in the U.S. to Canada.

Cornell said the company will instead focus reigniting Target's 1,800-store U.S. business, which has struggled with sluggish sales since the recession.

Exporting Target's cheap chic across the border

and liked in U.S. stores.

A weak holiday season that ended 2014 was the last straw.

"We missed the mark from the beginning by taking on too much too fast," Cornell said on the Target blog.

Antony Karabus, president of Hilco Retail Consulting in Toronto, praised the move.

"Target underestimated that the Canadian consumer is a highly sophisticated consumer who cross-border shops. It also underestimated the fiercely competitive landscape," Karabus said. "The CEO made the right call."

Some Canadian shoppers were more pointed in their criticism.

competition. Canadian standbys like Dollarama and Canadian Tire are formidable rivals.

And there's also heated competition from U.S. retailers including Wal-Mart Stores Inc. and Costco.

Big Lots Inc. and Best Buy Co. have closed stores there and Wal-Mart has seen its sales in Canada weaken. Sears Holding Corp. is selling most of its stake in its Canadian unit.

Target said Thursday that it expects about \$5.4 billion in fourth-quarter losses from discontinued operations in Canada. It foresees about \$275 million of losses on discontinued operations in fiscal 2015. □

Americans pocketing what they save on gas, data says

HIROKO TABUCHI

© 2015 New York Times

Executives were feeling bullish early this week at the nation's biggest retail trade show. James Curleigh, president of the Levi's brand, crooned the Beatles' "Revolution" in front of hundreds of his peers at a packed New York convention center. Robert B. Harrison, an executive at Macy's, boasted that his company was set to surpass Netflix to become the seventh-largest online retailer in the country. Kip Tindell, the Container Store's chief executive, declared retailing "the greatest occupation there is."

Then Wednesday, the Commerce Department struck a far gloomier note. Retail sales unexpectedly dropped 0.9 percent in December compared with the previous month, according to figures released Wednesday, suggesting that falling gas prices and a brighter job market have yet to lift consumer spending.

The decrease, far worse than economists' median forecast of a decline of 0.1 percent, followed a smaller-than-expected gain of 0.4 percent in November. The weak spending numbers could prompt economists to be more pessimistic in their outlook for economic growth this year.

The headline figure for December is misleading because it includes gasoline prices, which are sliding. Once gas and automobile sales are excluded, retail spending fell 0.3 percent, but even that dip still suggests consumers saved the extra money instead of spending it. Economists had expected sales excluding gas and autos to jump 0.5 percent.

Sales in electronics stores and at clothing and department stores fell in December's broad retreat. One factor weighing on consumer sentiment has been wage growth, which has been sluggish despite falling unemployment.

"We had a very conflict-

ed consumer this holiday season," said Steve Barr, U.S. retail and consumer sector leader at PricewaterhouseCoopers. He said lower-income households still struggled to spend more despite the lower gas prices because any money saved was offset by cost-of-living increases. Sluggish wage growth continued to limit demand, he said.

"The American consumer is fickle, and if we've learned anything over the past few years it's that it's dangerous to read a long-term trend based on a couple of months of data," said Chris Donnelly, senior managing director for retail at Accenture Strategy.

"The overall tailwinds the economy has are stronger than the past two years, and those should help drive continued growth," he said.

Another bright spot in the retail data was spending at restaurants and bars, which the Commerce Department said rose 0.8 percent compared with November, suggesting Americans used their gasoline savings to eat out more often, rather than shop.

Food and beverage stores, as well as pharmacies and other health and personal care stores, also had higher sales in December. And compared with the same month last year, overall retail spending grew 3.2 percent, the data showed, with gains in all retail categories except department stores and gas stations.

Full-year figures for consumer spending painted an even more upbeat picture, with retail sales rising 4 percent in 2014 compared with the previous year, led by an almost 9 percent surge in auto sales. Spending on building materials and home furnishings also increased significantly, reflecting strong home sales. Shoes and clothing purchases, together with electronics sales, managed growth of under 3 percent for the year. □



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US Financial Front:

End of holiday season boosts applications for jobless aid



Job seekers attend a job fair in Miami Lakes, Fla. The U.S. Labor Department reported on the number of people who applied for unemployment benefits for the week ending Jan. 10, 2015 on Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015.

(AP Photo/Alan Diaz)

JOSH BOAK

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The end of the holiday shopping season led to more Americans seeking unemployment benefits last week, raising the number of applications to an 18-

week high. Still, the number remains near historically low levels.

The Labor Department said Thursday that applications for benefits jumped 19,000 to a seasonally adjusted 316,000.

The four-week average, a

less volatile measure, rose 6,750 to 298,000. That average has plunged 11.4 percent over the past 12 months and has remained near historically low 300,000 levels since September.

The recent trend suggests that employers expect solid economic growth to continue, causing them to hold onto their workers and possibly increase their

headcounts.

The four-week average "still suggests solid job growth above 200,000 per month," said Sal Guatieri, senior economist at BMO Capital Markets.

However, economists are also weighing whether the increase primarily reflects a slight downshift in the pace of hiring or the regular difficulty in seasonally adjust-

ing the impact of retailers and shipping firms letting go of holiday workers.

"The rise in claims will keep us on alert for the possibility that momentum is weakening a bit, although the weekly data can be even more volatile than usual around this time of year," said Jim O'Sullivan, chief economist at High Frequency Economics. □

US wholesale prices drop 0.3 percent in December

M. CRUTSINGER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. wholesale prices fell in December by the largest amount in more than three years, reflecting the biggest monthly decline in the cost of gasoline in six years. The Labor Department said Thursday that its producer price index declined 0.3 percent last month, the biggest decline since a similar drop in October 2011. In November, wholesale prices dipped 0.2 percent. Over the past year, prices at the wholesale level have risen 1.1 percent, putting the 2014 rise in wholesale prices slightly below the 1.2 percent increase seen in 2013. Gas prices plunged 14.5

percent in December, the biggest decline since December 2008. Falling energy prices have pushed already low inflation even lower.

Excluding food and energy, wholesale prices rose 0.3 percent last month and were up 2.1 percent for all of 2014. Private economists, however, said that the 0.3 percent jump in core prices was skewed by a rise in profit margins at gas stations, a figure that was distorted by the big drop in gas prices.

Ian Shepherdson, chief economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics, said core prices would have risen a more modest 0.1 percent without the jump in profit margins. □



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Restaurants out to show Phoenix not a foodie desert

TERRY TANG

Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Feeding Super Bowl visitors a year after New York's restaurant scene did it is a hard act for any city to follow. But for downtown Phoenix, the NFL's big game is a chance to simply score some points as a major culinary player. The city's mission: To simply get the word out that the desert city is a foodie's oasis.

The city is using the week leading up to the main event in nearby Glendale as a launching pad for a new initiative called DTPHX City Sampler. Roughly 20 downtown restaurants will be offering two "signature items" for \$5. The deals range from a local draft beer with either a chicken tinga taco or pork carnitas taco at Paz Taqueria y Cantina, to a 6-ounce pour of an Arizona craft beer and two bacon-wrapped dates at District American Kitchen & Wine Bar. The goal is to drive tourists to get a taste of several restaurants — not just Mexican and Southwest — within walking distance

of the planned Super Bowl Central campus.

"You can spend \$20 on four restaurants and get eight items," said Sara Anderson, events manager for community development

rolled out whenever a massive event descends on the city.

"We want to breathe life into the effort that we have a thriving culinary scene here and it's very walk-

downtown Phoenix — are understandably taking advantage of their crowd proximity. The Renaissance Phoenix Downtown Hotel will have an outdoor concession stand, selling

clude a Phoenix franchise of Cousins Maine Lobster. But none of the offerings will overlap with any of nearby restaurants' cuisine.

If you're looking to get away from the Super Bowl Central chaos but get a taste of the local community, take the light rail to the Roosevelt stop. A block away on Pierce Street is the Phoenix Public Market Cafe. The urban eatery prides itself on using ingredients from the farmers market vendors who set up shop in their parking lot on Wednesdays and Saturdays. On farmers market days, starting Jan. 24, the cafe will have live music, a beer garden and games of corn hole. The restaurant will highlight its new barbecue platter of rotisserie pork and chicken and house-made sides of french fries, coleslaw and cornbread. Another new regular item worth trying is the handmade pretzel with jalapeno white cheddar sauce. Less than two blocks east of the Roosevelt stop on Roosevelt Street is Short Leash Sit...Stay, a brick-and-mortar spin-off of one of the city's first successful food trucks. Husband and wife Brad and Kat Moore have been garnishing locally-made hot dogs with intriguing ingredient combinations since 2010. Their trademark dogs are wrapped in nan (Indian bread) instead of buns. The regular menu's mouth-watering favorites include its ballpark-inspired "bear dog" — any hot dog with peanut butter, smoked gouda, bacon, barbecue sauce and Cracker Jack snacks. Menu plans for Super Bowl week include the possibility of signature items for potential contending teams. To represent the Green Bay Packers, they could do a bratwurst cheddar soup using Wisconsin cheddar. But a hot dog for the New England Patriots will take some consideration. "Could we put clam chowder on a hot dog? But that would be kind of weird," Brad Moore said. □



In this Jan. 14, 2015 photo, customers are serviced at the counter of The Phoenix Public Market Cafe restaurant in Phoenix. The Super Bowl takes place Feb. 1 in nearby Glendale, Ariz., and the restaurant scene in downtown Phoenix sees the game as an opportunity to show off its creative local cuisine.

(AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

group Downtown Phoenix Inc. "I think people coming into the Super Bowl will be shocked by the prices." The initiative will likely be

able," Anderson said. Some establishments that happen to be within the confines of Super Bowl Central — 12 blocks of

grilled grab-and-go meals that don't require utensils — including hamburgers, chicken fingers and onion rings. There will also be an outdoor bar selling cans of Bud Light — a Super Bowl sponsor — or alcohol in branded drinking cups that customers can carry around Super Bowl Central.

La Piazza Phx on First Street will temporarily add seating outside and have a bartender for the week. Owner Justin Piazza plans to come up with some Super Bowl specialty pizzas. But he also anticipates doling out more of his popular pies such as the Italian Stallion — which comes with tomatoes, house-made mozzarella, locally-made sausage, pepperoni, prosciutto and soppressata. Local food vendors will dominate the Super Bowl Central concession area, which will operate until midnight. Claudine's Kitchen, a family-owned Lebanese catering business that's used to dealing at Phoenix farmers markets — will dish out chicken and beef sandwiches with fries. The food truck fleet will in-



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Syria:

Rebels, government reach truce in besieged city of Homs

DIAA HADID

Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Syrian rebels and government forces began observing a 10-day truce on Thursday in the last rebel-held area of the central city of Homs, marking another setback for opposition fighters, activists said.

Government forces had blockaded al-Waar for some 20 months, only sporadically allowing in food. It is not clear how many civilians remain in the sprawling area separated from the rest of the city by the Orontes River.

Activist Beibars al-Tilawi said officials promised to allow the U.N. to deliver more food while the two sides discussed how to end the standoff. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights also reported the truce.

Al-Tilawi, who spoke from al-Waar via Skype, said the rebels were outgunned, and that the experience of fighters once holed up Homs' Old City was instructive: the area was destroyed, thousands of civilians were killed or forced to flee, and ultimately rebels negotiated their surrender in May 2014.

"They want to prevent Syrian forces from targeting the al-Waar area with military action, so it won't be like the Old City of Homs, where in the end, negotia-

tions and diplomacy solved the problem," al-Tilawi said. He said the rebels may end up surrendering the area over to government forces or remain there under a more lasting deal. Both approaches have been employed in other parts of Syria in the past.

Western diplomats and local officials have championed local truces as a way of easing the suffering caused by Syria's four-year conflict, which the U.N. estimates has killed some 220,000 people. But critics say the truces reward Syrian government forces for blockading civilians and that the government does not always live up to its obligation to allow the regular delivery of food and other aid.

Western-backed rebels have been retreating in northern Syria for months, caught between government forces on one side and jihadi groups like the Islamic State and the al-Qaida-linked Nusra Front on the other.

Russia, a key ally of President Bashar Assad, is meanwhile hoping to bring the government and the opposition together in a Jan. 26 meeting to agree on the basis of a future dialogue.

Most opposition groups, including the Western-backed Syrian National Coalition, have said they



Hundreds of Syrians mingle amid rubble before going out of town to buy food and other essential materials as they wait in line at a military checkpoint south of the capital, Damascus, Syria. Syrian rebels and government forces began observing a 10-day truce on Thursday, January 15, 2015, in the last rebel-held area of the central city of Homs,

(AP Photo)

will not attend the Moscow talks, saying the framework for the discussions is unclear and the meetings have little chance of success. In an interview with the Czech newspaper Liter-

arni Noviny, Assad said the two sides would discuss the foundations for a dialogue focusing on Syria's unity, fighting terrorism and supporting the army.

"As to what I expect from

this meeting, I think we should be realistic since we are dealing with personalities," Assad said. "If we succeed, it's a good thing. If we don't, we will not lose anything." □

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Ukraine separatists claim victory in battle for airport

M. CHERNOV
PETER LEONARD
Associated Press

DONETSK, Ukraine (AP) — Russian-backed separatists announced Thursday they had captured the shattered remains of the Donetsk airport terminal in eastern Ukraine and plan to claw back more territory, further dashing hopes for a lasting peace agreement. The airport, on the fringes of the rebel stronghold of Donetsk, has been at the center of bitter battles since May. Control over it was split between the separatists and Ukrainian forces who had held onto the main civilian terminal. Reduced to little more than a shell-littered wreck, the building is of limited strategic importance but has great symbolic value.

An AP reporter saw a rebel flag hoisted over that building Thursday, although fighting still appeared to be ongoing. Ukraine insisted government troops were holding their positions at the airport. Alexander Hug, deputy head of an Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe monitoring mission to Ukraine, said rebel forces carried out artillery attacks from within residential areas. "These attacks ... attract counter-fire from positions opposite and other directions, which leads unfortunately to repeated civilian casualties and damage for infrastructure," Hug said. The rebel leader in Donetsk, Alexander Zakharchenko, said the separatist offensive would continue and its



Pro-Russian rebel leader Alexander Zakharchenko, center, surrounded by guards, walks towards rebel positions near the Donetsk airport in Donetsk, Eastern Ukraine, Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015. Russian-backed separatists announced Thursday they had captured the shattered remains of the Donetsk airport terminal in eastern Ukraine and plan to claw back more territory, further dashing hopes for a lasting peace agreement. (AP Photo / Mstyslav Chernov)

goal was to recapture all territory lost to government forces last year. "Let our countrymen hear

this: We will not just give up our land. We will either take it back peacefully, or like that," Zakharchenko said,

nodding his head toward the sound of explosions coming from the direction of the airport. □

International force mulled to fight Boko Haram

C. TORCHIA
Associated Press
JOHANNESBURG (AP) — As Islamic militants from Boko Haram step up attacks in Nigeria that have led to the slaughter of more civilians, there is increasing talk that international military action, possibly including a multinational force, may be needed to help crush the insurgency in Africa's most populous country. The debate has taken on new urgency since Jan. 3, when Boko Haram extremists swept into the northeastern town of Baga in Borno state, overran a military base and, according to witnesses, killed hundreds of civilians in the days that followed. It was one of the most brazen assaults since militants kidnapped nearly 300 girls last

year, setting off an international outcry. Amnesty International has released satellite images showing widespread destruction — with about 3,700 structures damaged or destroyed — but the horrifying picture of the attack is incomplete because aid workers, journalists and others cannot reach the Boko Haram-controlled area. Extremists, who encountered resistance from civilian militias in Baga, systematically slaughtered civilians in what analysts believe was retaliation for their defiance. Boko Haram's message, according to analyst Matthew Henman, was: "If you organize these militias against us, this is the response that you will receive." President Goodluck Jona-

than, who is running for re-election next month, visited Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, on Thursday in his first trip to the north-east since a state of emergency was imposed in May 2014. His office said in a statement that he met with troops involved in fighting the extremists as part of his "surprise visit." He also visited hundreds of civilians who were staying in a camp in Maiduguri after fleeing Baga. Nigeria's neighbors are already being shaken by Boko Haram's territorial expansion. Niger, Chad and Cameroon have seen flows of refugees into their countries. In the case of Cameroon, there even have been some cross-border attacks. □



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Switzerland stuns markets by giving up on currency peg

PAN PYLAS

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Rarely has one statement prompted such a dramatic move in currency markets.

The Swiss franc achieved a turbo-charged lift Thursday after the Swiss National Bank, or SNB, ditched an increasingly expensive policy to limit the export-sapping rise of the currency. Within minutes of the early morning announcement, the currency spiked around a third against the euro and the dollar while Swiss shares tanked, prompting confusion and a fair degree of anger across trading room floors.

The decision by the SNB to call time on its efforts to prevent the euro from trading below 1.20 francs was a huge surprise and came amid mounting speculation that the European Central Bank will next week back a big stimulus program that will put more euros in circulation which would further dilute their value. That expectation has pushed the euro down to near-decade



People follow the development of courses in Zurich after the turbulence at the stock exchange, pictured Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015. Switzerland's central bank said Thursday it has scrapped a policy that limited how much the euro could fall against the Swiss franc, an unexpected decision that caused gyrations in financial markets. The move to ditch the policy — which ensured the euro did not fall below 1.20 francs — sent the euro plummeting a stunning 30 percent against the Swiss currency before it recovered somewhat.

(AP Photo/Keystone, Walter Bieri)

lows against the dollar.

As the outlook for the euro has darkened, the cost for the Swiss central bank of defending the peg by buying euros or selling francs has risen.

Though the timing of the Swiss decision proved a surprise, most foreign exchange experts thought the peg would have to be abandoned, just as previous such efforts had.

In 1992, for example, the British pound suffered similarly dramatic losses as it crashed out of a fixed exchange-rate system that was then operating in Europe.

Like the Bank of England then, the Swiss central bank faced a tough task controlling its currency. That was evident in the franc's movements in the markets after it abandoned the peg. The euro plunged to a low around the 0.85 francs mark in the minutes after the decision, before recovering somewhat to trade 13 percent lower at 1.04 francs.

It wasn't just the euro that got caught up in the franc's frenzied moves. The dollar initially plunged by a similar amount, though it also recouped some of its kneejerk losses to trade 15 percent lower at 0.8884 francs.

"For years central banks have tried to avoid days like today by being transparent and making moves like this over time while drip feeding their intentions to the markets," said Craig

Erlam, market analyst at Alpari. "The SNB have shown themselves to be amateurs today and there are many people that will suffer considerably as a result."

Despite the backlash, the SNB will face from those who are nursing potential losses that could run into billions, many analysts thought the decision was inevitable in light of next week's expected announcement by the ECB to break new ground in its efforts to inject life into the ailing 19-country euro-zone economy. Its stimulus package is expected to be worth as much as 1 trillion euros (\$1.17 trillion).

"The SNB clearly expected to see a huge surge of inflows in the week ahead and saw little reason to provide these buyers of francs with an artificially cheap rate," said Simon Derrick, chief currency strategist at BNY Mellon.

The Swiss central bank argued that the "exceptional and temporary" measure to protect the Swiss economy was "no longer justified." □

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Haiti's new PM faces instability, protests

DAVID McFADDEN

Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)

— Haiti has a new prime minister as it enters a phase of political uncertainty, with its parliament dissolved, opposition activists promising intensified street protests and its president ruling by decree because of a bitter standoff with lawmakers.

Prime Minister Evans Paul was selected last month but a political deadlock meant the Senate and Chamber of Deputies could not debate his nomination before their terms expired Monday.

Since President Michel

proved by a parliament that is dysfunctional. And I'm not responsible for the dysfunction of the last parliament," Paul, who was in the moderate opposition to Martelly before becoming prime minister, told The Associated Press.

The latest bout of political turmoil in Haiti has been brewing since shortly after Martelly took office in 2011 as a newcomer to politics with little support in parliament, which is critical in a country where the constitution deliberately curbs executive power.

Martelly was supposed to call elections in 2011 for a

ties to "hold free, fair, and inclusive elections as soon as possible." Earlier this week, a group of ambassadors and the U.N. special representative in Haiti said Martelly has their support through the period of political flux.

During an AP interview at the prime minister's official residence, Paul was sharply critical of violent anti-government street protests that have become increasingly common in downtown Port-au-Prince. Protesters calling for Martelly's resignation have burned tires and thrown rocks at riot police, who responded



Haiti's new Prime Minister Evans Paul gives an interview at his government residence in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2015. Paul, the former mayor of Port-au-Prince and presidential candidate, automatically became Prime Minister after both houses failed to approve him by Jan. 12 when the terms of both houses expired. Paul was named to run the day-to-day affairs of the government by President Michel Martelly, replacing Laurent Lamothe.

(AP Photo/Dieu Nalio Chery)

Martelly can now rule by decree under the constitution, Paul automatically took office this week and began overseeing day-to-day government operations as the hemisphere's poorest country faces social unrest that could undermine its fragile stability. The former Port-au-Prince mayor said he deplored the fact that he was taking office without a vote and with no sitting parliament and blamed a group of opposition lawmakers for the deadlock. He said a new electoral council would be in place "in less than two weeks" to start organizing long-delayed legislative and municipal elections. "It's difficult to be ap-

majority of Senate seats, the entire Chamber of Deputies and local offices. But six opposition senators used parliamentary procedure to prevent a vote while accusing the president of abusing his authority to appoint supporters to the electoral council and other posts.

Haiti's parliament was unable to pass a law to organize the elections and extend lawmakers' terms before it dissolved, on the same day the country marked the fifth anniversary of the devastating 2010 earthquake.

On Wednesday, the Organization of American States said it supported the efforts of Haitian authori-

ties to "hold free, fair, and inclusive elections as soon as possible." Earlier this week, a group of ambassadors and the U.N. special representative in Haiti said Martelly has their support through the period of political flux.

During an AP interview at the prime minister's official residence, Paul was sharply critical of violent anti-government street protests that have become increasingly common in downtown Port-au-Prince. Protesters calling for Martelly's resignation have burned tires and thrown rocks at riot police, who responded

Haitian historian Georges Michel, who blamed both the government and the opposition for the impasse, dismissed that idea. □

America easing decades-old restrictions on travel to Cuba

PETER BAKER

© 2015 New York Times

WASHINGTON/HAVANA - The U.S. government on Friday will begin making it easier for Americans to travel to Cuba than it has been for more than half a century, opening the door to a new era of contact between neighbors that have been estranged longer than most of their citizens have been alive.

The Obama administration announced Thursday a set of new regulations to take effect Friday easing decades-old restrictions on travel, business and remittances, putting into reality some of the changes promised by President Barack Obama last month when he announced plans to resume normal diplomatic relations with Havana.

Under the new regulations, Americans will now be allowed to travel to Cuba for any of a dozen specific reasons without first obtaining a special license from the government. Airlines and travel agents will be allowed to provide service to Cuba without a specific license. And travelers will be permitted to use credit cards and spend money while in the country and bring back up to \$400 in souvenirs, including up to \$100 in alcohol or tobacco.

The new regulations will also make it easier for U.S. telecommunications providers and financial institutions to do business with Cuba. Americans will be allowed to send more money to Cubans, up to \$2,000 every three months instead of the \$500 currently permitted.

While formally the new rules do not allow basic tourism, they are written in such a way that experts said they may have that effect.

"This is basically the end of the travel ban once they work out the kinks," said Julia E. Sweig, a longtime scholar and author on Cuba.

"At first glance the new regulations look to allow most Americans to travel to Cuba without having to ask for permission in advance and by booking air travel directly rather than through authorized groups and agencies," she said. "Next move will have to be a civil aviation agreement to allow commercial, not just charter, air travel."

Administration officials said the new approach would benefit Cubans as well.

"These changes will have a direct impact in further engaging and empowering the Cuban people, promoting positive change for Cuba's citizens," Treasury Secretary Jacob J. Lew, whose department oversees sanctions policy, said in a statement.

"Cuba has real potential for economic growth," he added, "and by increasing travel, commerce, communications, and private business development between the United States and Cuba, the United States can help the Cuban people determine their own future."

The administration moved to ease the restrictions after obtaining confirmation that 53 incarcerated people it deemed political prisoners had been released in accordance with the agreement Obama and President Raúl Castro of Cuba struck last month. Cuba has also released an American held prisoner for years, Alan P. Gross, and a Cuban who had worked as a spy for the United States. Obama released three Cuban spies who had been held for years and were considered folk heroes in Havana.

The broader trade embargo first imposed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower after the Cuban revolution that brought Castro's brother Fidel to power will remain in place unless Congress decides to lift it, as Obama has urged it to do. □



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and assistance to families in need. Today members of the Malmberg family have a role as board members and strategic planners and are no longer managing the daily operations of the company. Instead they have transitioned that part of the business to a professional management team, and as board members plot the course for further developments.

De Palm Tours grants its success to their dedicated staff members, the many loyal customers and Aruba's visitors. They are proud to have served Aruba's tourism for past 55 years and will continue to do so by operating safe, fun and

ORANJESTAD - De Palm Tours, Aruba's leading tour, activity and transfer company, celebrates its 55th Anniversary this year. Since its founding on January 15, 1960 by Luis C. De Palm, and later acquired by Harold Malmberg in 1971 the company has serviced and transported millions of visitors all over the island. Under the leadership of Harold Malmberg the company has flourished, growing from six employees to three hundred staff members, all committed to providing visitors with a convenient, hassle-free,



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AYO - Again this year the Aruban Donkey Sanctuary is organizing its traditional Walkathon, a walk of 6.5 kilometers. Once again this is a tenth year and therefore a jubileum. Young and old are invited to walk together through our Aruban nature. Accompanied by some donkeys the walk will begin on Saturday 17 January at 5 pm starting at the Ayo Rock Formation park. Sign up will start at 4 pm. Because of our jubileum

the Dierenlot Foundation of the Netherlands has made a handsome offer: For the 10 florins which each participant pays, this Foundation will double that amount! In this way they wish to add extra support to the cause of the Donkey Sanctuary. At the end of the walk you will be treated

to delicious fresh fruit donated by Super Food of Aruba. Therefore this year 2015 there is even more reason to join this walk and to support a worthy cause on our island. So, out of your chair and into the open air! For more information, please contact Desiree Elender at 593-2933. □

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VanEps Kunneman VanDoorne donates reading books to “Scol Paso Pa Futuro” elementary school

ORANJESTAD - In the context of the new year, law firm VanEps Kunneman VanDoorne donates pack-

ages of reading books to elementary schools on the Dutch Caribbean islands where the firm has

offices. The first donation was made recently to Scol Paso Pa Futuro in Aruba; a school for children with a



learning disability. VanEps Kunneman VanDoorne considers education very important. As a result, the firm focuses its sponsoring and donation policy on youth and youth development. In the holiday month of December, VanEps Kunneman VanDoorne chose to send digital Christmas cards instead of paper alternatives, in order for the amount saved to be used to support local education on the islands. Steffen Hagen, branch manager of the Aruba of-

fice, and Julitza Koolman, secretary, handed the package of reading books to the school's teachers. Steffen: “A school for special education such as Paso only has limited means. A teacher told me that the library had even been broken into recently and that books were stolen. Now it feels even better to be able to donate a large package of good, new books to fill the shelves again. The children and teachers were heartwarming happy with it!” □



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Ralph and Frances Ann Donofri honored at the Holiday Inn Resort

PALM BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very nice couple whom are loyal and friendly visitors of Aruba, at the Holiday Inn Beach Resort, as Ambassadors of Goodwill. The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 20-or-more consecutive years.

The honorees were Mr. Ralph and Mrs. Frances Ann Donofri from Woodbury, New York. Ralph and Frances Ann love the Island very much and are loyal guests from the Holiday Inn Resort for the last 24 years. They love the friendly people of Aruba, the weather, beaches, and restaurants, and Aruba feels like a second home to them. In fact, most of all they love the employees working at the Holiday Inn – they say they are like a family to them. Ralph and Frances Ann are looking forward to many more visits to their beloved Aruba. The certificate was presented by Mr. Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with Mrs. Brenda James and staff members representing the Holiday Inn Beach Resort. □





New York Knicks' Carmelo Anthony smiles as he controls the ball during the NBA basketball game between Milwaukee Bucks and New York Knicks at the O2 Arena in London, Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015.

Knicks drop 16th straight, fall to Bucks in London

MATTIAS KAREN
AP Sports Writer

LONDON (AP) — O.J. Mayo scored 22 points, Brandon Knight had 20 points and six steals, and the Milwaukee Bucks routed New York Knicks 95-79 on Thursday night, extending the Knicks' franchise-record losing streak to 16. With the Knicks showing why they have lost 26 of 27 games and are an NBA-worst 5-36, the contest was a poor advertisement for the NBA in its annual London game that showcases its brand overseas.

The Knicks missed their first 10 shots — three in a 6-second span — and gave up 14 offensive rebounds, 10 in the first half. The Bucks took a 12-0 lead, were up by 24 in the second quarter and never let New York closer than 11 the rest of the way.

The return of Carmelo Anthony and Amare Stoudemire did little to spark New York.

Continued on Page 20

FREE FALLING



Qi, Peel win aerials titles

Xu Mengtao, of China, jumps during the women's freestyle World Cup aerials competition Thursday, Jan. 8, 2015, in Park City, Utah.

Associated Press
Page 20

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Family affair: Vonn's relatives arrive as she nears record

ANDREW DAMPF

AP Sports Writer

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy

(AP) — Lindsey Vonn is starting to sense this could be a special weekend.

So is her family.

Five of Vonn's closest relatives are flying in to Italy in hopes of seeing Vonn match or possibly break Annemarie Moser-Proell's all-time World Cup wins record.

While boyfriend Tiger Woods isn't making the trip, Vonn's father, her step mom, her mother, her step dad and her younger sister Laura will all be on hand when the racing begins Friday with a downhill — Vonn's specialty.

Another downhill is scheduled for Saturday, followed by a super-G on Sunday.

"So it will be a lot of people and hopefully a good weekend," Vonn said after leading the only training session Thursday by 0.12 seconds ahead of American teammate Julia Mancuso.

It could also be emotional considering her repaired relationship with her father, Alan Kildow, who taught her to ski but from whom she was estranged while married to Thomas Vonn.

On a course where she has already won seven times, Vonn needs one victory to match Austrian great Moser-Proell's 62 wins set between 1970 and 1980.

"I got my first podium here and I have a really good understanding of the hill," Vonn said. "It's like my European Lake Louise. I'm hoping for some more great memories this weekend." Vonn has won 15 races in Lake Louise, Alberta, which is clearly her favorite slope. But Cortina is next on the list.

Besides her seven wins on the Olympia delle Tofane course,

Vonn also has seven podium finishes, including her career first in 2004.

But the slope this year is different from past seasons. With so little snow having fallen in the Dolomites Range, the Tofane's terrain and jumps stand out more than usual.

but was postponed due to difficult weather conditions.

"I'm really happy we have three races here," Vonn said. "It gives me chances to get a few more wins, so we'll see." But heavy snow is forecast for the weekend, which could affect the schedule.

After initially tearing up her right knee in a crash at the 2013 world championships in Schladming, Austria, Vonn re-injured herself last season in France as she was attempting to return for the Sochi Olympics, which she ended up missing.



Lindsey Vonn, left, of the United States, stands in the finish area during a training session for an alpine ski women's World Cup downhill event in Cortina, Italy, Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015.

Associated Press

"I skied pretty well today but I know I can ski better for the race tomorrow," said Vonn, who stood up out of her tuck at the end of her training run. "I was a little bit intimidated by all the jumps and the air that were in the course today. But despite that I think I skied solid and I'm really looking forward to tomorrow."

Friday's race was originally scheduled for Bad Kleinkirchheim, Austria, last weekend,

"I hope the weather will keep us surprised and happy this weekend," said overall World Cup leader Tina Maze of Slovenia, who was third in training, 0.18 behind Vonn.

Maze, the only other skier besides Vonn to win a downhill this season, will likely be the American's top challenger. She won one of the two downhills here last season while Vonn was out recuperating from a series of knee injuries.

"My mom is actually coming here with her ticket for Sochi that she exchanged," Vonn said. "I think she was one of the only people that bought that trip insurance that you can buy on Expedia."

Vonn clearly wants to make it a worthwhile trip — for her family, her support team, her fans, and for herself.

"I'm just going to try to ski my best," she said. "And we'll see what happens." □

Holtby stellar again, Capitals blank Flyers 1-0

WASHINGTON (AP) — Braden Holtby's iron-man run produced another shut-out as he made 21 saves in his 20th consecutive start and lifted the Washington Capitals to a 1-0 win over the Philadelphia Flyers on Wednesday night.

Holtby put up his fourth blank slate of the season, including three since he became too hot to rest. Jason Chimera's first-period goal was all the offense the Capitals needed as they won for the 14th time in 19 games overall and for the seventh straight home game.

Holtby is 14-2-4 during his starting streak, and he hasn't allowed more than one goal in his last three games. He also played in his 26th consecutive game, extending his franchise record.

Holtby was nearly matched by Flyers goalie Rob Zepp, the 33-year-old rookie who filled in for the second straight game while Steve Mason is out because of an upper-body injury. Zepp made 25 saves, including a terrific left pad save on Eric Fehr late in the second period.

CANADIENS 3, BLUE JACKETS 2

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Max Pacioretty scored two power-play goals, and P.K. Subban added another — all in a span of 3:53 of the third period — to lead Montreal to a comeback victory over Columbus.

Carey Price made 14 saves, and Andrei Markov had two assists for the Canadiens, who have earned points in eight of nine games and 11 of 13.

Ryan Johansen scored a third-period, power-play goal to extend his career-best point streak to 11 games. Kevin Connauton also had a goal for Columbus on its first shot of the game. Sergei Bobrovsky made 28 saves and lost his shutout bid with 8½ minutes remaining.

The Canadiens, who had seven power plays, scored on three consecutive advantages in the third period to overcome a 2-0 deficit.

They came in ranked 28th in the NHL on the power play.

DUCKS 4, MAPLE LEAFS 0 ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) — Corey Perry scored three goals and Frederik Andersen made 28 saves for his second career shutout in Anaheim's blanking of Toronto.

Kyle Palmieri also scored in the Ducks' fourth victory in five games, putting them back atop the overall NHL standings alongside Nashville.

Capping his league-leading third hat trick of the season with an empty-net goal, Perry took over the team lead with 18 goals this season despite missing 15 games with illness and injury.

His second goal was a breakaway set up by a long, beautiful backhand pass from captain Ryan Getzlaf, who had two assists in Anaheim's first win over Toronto in seven tries. Jonathan Bernier stopped 21 shots for the Maple Leafs, 1-3 under new coach Peter Horachek.

Andersen earned his 44th victory in just 64 career games. He also got an assist on Perry's empty-netter that completed the forward's eighth career hat trick.

DEVILS 5, KINGS 3 LOS ANGELES (AP) — Steve Bernier netted his first two power-play goals of the season, and New Jersey scored three times during a 68-second span of the second period in a victory over Los Angeles.

Martin Havlat, Michael Cammalleri and Michael Ryder also scored for the Devils, and Cory Schneider made 23 saves.

The Kings' goals were scored by Marian Gaborik, Justin Williams and captain Dustin Brown, who ended a 17-game drought. The defending Stanley Cup champions have played 20 consecutive games without being outshot but are 8-7-5 during that stretch.

It was the third meeting between the teams since the Kings beat the Devils in the 2012 Stanley Cup finals. □



Washington Capitals goalie Braden Holtby (70) catches the puck in the second period of an NHL hockey game against the Philadelphia Flyers, Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2015, in Washington.

Associated Press

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Hawks beat Celtics 105-91 for 10th straight

The Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — DeMarre Carroll and Jeff Teague each scored 22 points to help the Atlanta Hawks win their 10th straight game, 105-91 over the Boston Celtics on Wednesday night.

Paul Millsap added 18 points and 10 rebounds for Eastern Conference-leading Atlanta, 31-8 overall and 15-5 on the road. The Hawks have their first double-digit winning streak since winning 11 in a row early in the 1997-98 season. They also have won 10 straight on the road, the longest streak in club history.

Teague, Millsap and Carroll were well-rested after getting a night off Tuesday, when Al Horford led the Hawks past Philadelphia with his first career triple-double. On Wednesday, it was Horford and veteran outside shooter Kyle Korver resting up as their teammates easily took care of the Celtics.

Avery Bradley had 17 points and Jared Sullinger finished with 14 points and nine rebounds for Boston. **WARRIORS 104, HEAT 89**

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Stephen Curry made seven 3-pointers and finished with 32 points and Golden State overwhelmed undermanned Miami for its eighth straight victory.

With a strained left hamstring sidelining Heat star



Atlanta Hawks forward DeMarre Carroll, left, grabs a rebound ahead of Boston Celtics center Kelly Olynyk during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Boston, Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2015.

Associated Press

Dwyane Wade, the NBA-leading Warriors (31-5) mowed down Miami the way they have most opponents recently. Golden State has won by an average of 19.8 points during its current streak. Chris Bosh had 26 points and seven rebounds but couldn't carry the Heat alone. Luol Deng added 19 points, and Hassan Whiteside had 10 points and 12 rebounds for Miami. Wade left with the hamstring injury in the first half of the Heat's win at the Los Angeles Lakers on Tuesday

night. The team said he is "day to day."

SPURS 98, HORNETS 93
CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Manu Ginobili had 27 points on 10-of-14 shooting and San Antonio beat Charlotte to snap the Hornets' winning streak at five games.

Danny Green scored 18 points and Tim Duncan added 14 points and 10 rebounds to help the defending champion Spurs beat the Hornets for the eighth straight time.

Ginobili had a key driving

layup and a 3-pointer late in the fourth quarter after the Hornets cut the Spurs' lead to one with 4 minutes to play.

Kemba Walker had 28 points on 9-of-24 shooting after averaging 30.2 points during the Hornets' winning streak. Hornets center Bismack Biyombo had 12 points, 15 rebounds and five blocked shots filling in for Al Jefferson. Lance Stephenson returned from a 14-game absence due to a pelvic sprain and had eight points in 19 minutes.

CLIPPERS 100, TRAIL BLAZERS 94

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Jamal Crawford scored 25 points, DeAndre Jordan had 17 points and 18 rebounds and the Los Angeles Clippers rallied in the fourth quarter.

Crawford scored the go-ahead basket on a 3-pointer with 3:55 remaining as the Clippers (26-13) came back from a six-point deficit.

It was Los Angeles' second win over Portland (30-9) this season and ended the Trail Blazers' four-game winning streak.

Chris Paul had 23 points and 10 assists and Blake Griffin scored 18 points for the Clippers.

WIZARDS 105, BULLS 99

CHICAGO (AP) — Paul Pierce had 22 points and Washington beat Chicago, despite Derrick Rose's season-high 32 points for the Bulls.

John Wall scored 10 of his 21 points in the fourth quarter. Bradley Beal added 17, and the Wizards knocked off the Central division leaders for the second time in six days.

Washington trailed by as much as 11 in the first half but outscored Chicago 32-19 in the third quarter to take a seven-point lead to the fourth. The Wizards hung on after Chicago pulled within one, giving the Bulls their fourth loss in five games. □

Knicks

Anthony led the Knicks with 25 points. Stoudemire was scoreless in 8 first-half minutes and didn't play after the break. Anthony missed the previous six games because of a knee problem, and Stoudemire had been sidelined since Dec. 25, also with a knee injury.

With both coaches resting their starters in the fourth quarter, New York cut it to 87-76 with 4:38 to play. But Bucks coach Jason Kidd put Knight back in — while Anthony stayed on the bench — and Mayo finished off the game with a 3 that made it 92-76 with 3

Continued from Page 17

minutes left.

Mayo scored 16 points in the first half on 6-of-8 shooting. Giannis Antetokoun added 16 points for the Bucks, Khris Middleton had 14 and Zaza Pachulia 11. Knight and Mayo, meanwhile, played with all the intensity that New York was lacking. Knight did a bit of everything, adding six assists and five rebounds.

TIP-INS

Knicks: New York also played in London two years ago, beating Detroit 102-87. Anthony had 26 points in that game and Bucks coach Jason Kidd



Milwaukee Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo, left, goes to the basket alongside New York Knicks' Jason Smith during the NBA basketball game between Milwaukee Bucks and New York Knicks at the O2 Arena in London, Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015.

Associated Press

started at point guard for New York. ... Knicks jerseys vastly outnumbered Bucks shirts in the crowd.

Bucks: Milwaukee has won six of its last eight games to improve to 21-19. The Bucks are 3-0 against New York this season. ... Guard Kendall Marshall went down hard when fighting for a loose ball in the second quarter. He stayed on the floor for a minute before being helped up and escorted to the locker room. He didn't return.

UP NEXT

Knicks: Host New Orleans on Monday night.

Bucks: Host Toronto on Monday night. □

Qi, Peel win aerals titles at freestyle skiing worlds

KREISCHBERG, Austria (AP)

— Qi Guangpu of China successfully defended his aerals title, while Laura Peel of Australia won the women's event on the opening day Thursday of the freestyle skiing world championships.

Qi landed solidly from his final jump, which included a triple back flip and five full twists, to gain 139.50 points. Alex Bowen of the United States, who has yet to earn a podium on the World Cup circuit, won silver with 121.27 points, and Maxim Gustik of Belarus ended on 119.91 to take bronze.

Qi also won the title at the 2013 worlds in Voss, Norway, and placed fourth at the Sochi Olympics the following year.

In the women's race, Peel earned 88.47 points to edge Kiley Mckinnon of the United States for the gold medal by 0.35 points and become the first Australian winner since Alisa Camplin 12 years ago. Defending champion Xu Mengtao of China won bronze with 86.84.

Mckinnon's silver was the first American women's aerals medal since Nikki Stone's bronze 16 years

ago.

Xu, the Olympic silver medalist, led the competition until landing on her back after the final jump.

"I just can't believe it," said Peel, who earned her sole World Cup win at the same venue in Austria three years ago. "(Xu) is an incredible jumper and her landing is usually bang on. I am just so happy to be on top of the podium."

Xu Sicun of China crashed after landing from her second jump and was carried off on a sled. There was no immediate update on her condition.*



Qi Guangpu, of China, celebrates after the men's freestyle World Cup aerals Thursday, Jan. 8, 2015, in Park City, Utah. Qi took the win.
Associated Press

49ers appoint Tomsula as head coach, replacing Harbaugh

JANIE McCAULEY

AP Sports Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

The San Francisco 49ers promoted longtime defensive line coach Jim Tomsula to head coach on Wednesday, going with a familiar face following a national search that took more than two weeks and ended right in house.

Tomsula is set to be formally introduced Thursday in a news conference at Levi's Stadium.

Tomsula replaces Jim Harbaugh, who parted ways with the Niners on Dec. 28 in what the team called a "mutual decision." Harbaugh was introduced as Michigan's new coach two days later following a successful four-year stint during which the 49ers reached three straight NFC championship games and a Super Bowl. "After conducting a thorough coaching search, and meeting with a number of outstanding candidates, Jim Tomsula clearly is the right man to lead this team," CEO Jed York said in a statement. "Jim is a great teacher and a tremendous mentor who conducts himself with great class and integrity." San Francisco went 8-8



In this photo taken Jan. 2, 2011, San Francisco 49ers interim head coach Jim Tomsula stands on the sideline during the fourth quarter of an NFL football game in San Francisco.

Associated Press

last season and missed the playoffs for the first time in four years since Harbaugh arrived in January 2011, and the franchise is turning to a familiar face to get the Niners back on track to chase a sixth championship.

York said a day after the season ended he wanted to find a "teacher" to lead the franchise forward. Certainly a coach familiar with the operation was important as the 49ers build around quarterback Colin Kaepernick, who is coming off a disappointing year.

"I love my guys," Tomsula said in a long sit-down with The Associated Press leading up to last season.

"I have the best guys. They are just awesome guys from top to bottom." With the 46-year-old Tomsula's hiring, there are questions about whether defensive coordinator Vic Fangio will depart given he wasn't chosen for the top job and got leapfrogged by Tomsula.

"Our organization is excited to have Jim Tomsula leading this football team," general manager Trent Baalke said. "We have had the privilege of working alongside Jim for the past eight seasons. He is a proven leader, teacher and mentor, and we look forward to seeing him apply his craft and vision to our team." □

Cowboys coach Garrett receives 5-year extension

SCHUYLER DIXON

AP Sports Writer

IRVING, Texas (AP) —

Dallas coach Jason Garrett fielded questions about his shaky job security for two years before breaking through with the Cowboys' first trip to the NFL playoffs since 2009.

Now he's all but guaranteed to have the second-longest coaching tenure for the storied franchise behind Tom Landry, the only coach the Cowboys knew for their first 29 years. Garrett has a new five-year contract, and defensive coordinator Rod Marinelli is also coming back on a three-year deal, a person with knowledge of both agreements told The Associated Press on Tuesday. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the team had yet to announce the deals.

Garrett will make about \$6 million annually — roughly \$30 million in total value — after just completing his first contract, at four years and \$20 million.

The Cowboys broke through a three-year rut of 8-8 seasons that ended with losses that kept them out of the playoffs by winning the NFC East divi-

sion at 12-4. Dallas beat Detroit in the wild-card round before last weekend's 26-21 divisional round loss at Green Bay.

"I really believe that we've built something here that we're all proud of and we're all excited about taking the next step with this football team," Garrett said earlier Tuesday, before the deals were settled.

"We have the right kind of guys on our staff, the right kind of guys on our team, and we're excited about the opportunities and the challenges ahead."

The 48-year-old Garrett, a former backup on Dallas' Super Bowl-winning teams of the 1990s, is 42-32 in four-plus seasons and needs two victories to tie his old coach, Jimmy Johnson, for second on the franchise wins list. Landry is third all-time in the NFL with 250 victories.

When he finishes the first year of his new contract, Garrett will have coached the Cowboys longer than Johnson, who won consecutive Super Bowls after the 1992 and '93 seasons. Landry also won two titles. □

Del Potro loses in quarterfinals at Sydney International

SYDNEY (AP) — Defending champion Juan Martin del Potro was beaten in the quarterfinals of the Sydney International on Thursday, losing 7-6 (5), 7-6 (3) to Kazakhstan qualifier Mikhail Kukushkin.

Del Potro, the 2009 U.S. Open champion returning from an 11-month injury layoff, needed a wild-card entry to get into the main draw because his world ranking had dropped to 338.

"I got lucky playing three matches in this tournament against good players," del Potro said. "I'm here, I'm still alive. I feel tired, but OK."

Kukushkin will next play Argentina's Leonardo Mayer, who beat Julien Benneteau of France 6-3, 7-6 (4).

Wimbledon champion and second-seeded Petra Kvitova beat Tsvetana Pironkova of Bulgaria 7-5, 6-1 to advance to

the women's singles final. Kvitova will play Karolina Pliskova, who beat Germany's Angelique Kerber 6-3, 6-2.

At the Heineken Open in Auckland, New Zealand, fourth-seeded Kevin Anderson of South Africa became the only seeded player to reach the semifinals when he beat American Steve Johnson 6-4, 7-6 (8) in a match that pivoted on a line call in the second-set tiebreak.

Johnson hit a backhand passing shot at 7-7 that seemed to clip the line, giving him the chance to serve for the set. But the shot was called out, the point went to Anderson and he was able to clinch the set and match, having previously spurned the opportunity when serving for it at 5-4.

"That was a real high-quality match," Anderson said. "I played re-



Mikhail Kukushkin of Kazakhstan stretches to play a shot in his match against Juan Martin del Potro of Argentina at the Sydney International Tennis tournament in Sydney, Australia, Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015.

Associated Press

ally well from the beginning."

Anderson will play Jiri Vesely after the Czech qualifier beat American Donald Young 6-2, 6-3 to reach an ATP Tour semifinal for the first time.

Lucky loser Lucas Pouille of France beat Albert Ramos-Vinolas of Spain

6-3, 6-2 and Adrian Panarin of France beat another lucky loser, Alejandro Falla of Colombia, 6-3, 6-1 to set up the other semifinal.

At the rain-affected Hobart International, Britain's Heather Watson advanced to the semifinals with a 7-6 (0), 6-2

win over ninth-seeded Roberta Vinci of Italy.

American Alison Riske also won her quarterfinal, beating Zarina Diyas of Kazakhstan 6-3, 6-0.

In a second-round match, Karin Knapp of Italy defeated top-seeded Casey Dellacqua of Australia, 7-5, 2-6, 6-3. □

Nadal working hard to gain full fitness for Australian Open

DENNIS PASSA

AP Sports Writer

MELBOURNE, Australia

(AP) — Rafael Nadal says he's "working as hard as I can" to be ready for Monday's start to the Australian Open following a right wrist injury and appendix surgery which sidelined him for most of the last six months of 2014.

Nadal went through a strenuous workout at Melbourne Park on Wednesday, followed by a two-hour exhibition match against Mark Philippoussis and Fernando Verdasco as part of a charity night to open the renovated Margaret Court Arena, the Australian Open's third court with a retractable roof.

On Thursday, Nadal said he recovered well from the

tough day of workouts, but added it would be difficult to quickly reach the level of fitness to win the title this year. "I'm back, and I'm healthy, but it's hard to come back after such injuries," Nadal said. "I will hope for first round, second round, and take the wins as they come."

Nadal was knocked out in the first round in a tournament at Doha two weeks ago by a qualifier, but then teamed with good friend, Juan Monaco of Argentina, to win the doubles final, giving him some valuable court time.

"To start the season with a title, even if it's only in doubles, is a great feeling," the 14-time Grand Slam champion said in Doha. "When you lose early in singles it's a good way to still be

in competition. A win is always a good feeling and to have that feeling again was very positive."

Nadal had played only eight singles matches since Wimbledon before arriving in Doha.

"It was an important week because I came back to the tour after a long time not being competitive," Nadal said. "I lost in the first round in a match that can happen."

"I'm going to work hard to be ready for Australia but if that doesn't happen I'm going to keep working hard to be ready for Rio, then Buenos Aires and Indian Wells and Miami."

The third-seeded Nadal will find out on Friday who will be play in the first round when the tournament draw is held. □



Spain's Rafael Nadal plays backhand return to Australia's Omar Jasika during an exhibition match on Margaret Court Arena ahead of the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2015.

Associated Press

Google to stop consumer sales of Glass to redesign device

MICHAEL LIEDTKE

AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

Google will stop selling its Internet-connected eye-wear to consumers until the company can develop a more polished and affordable version that's less likely to be viewed as a freakish device.

The sales moratorium on the nearly 2-year-old "Explorer" edition of Google Glass goes into effect Jan. 19. The decision announced Thursday coincides with Glass' spin-off from the secretive Google X lab where it was invented.

Glass will now operate in a division steered by veteran marketing executive Ivy Ross, whose past experience includes stints at fashion-conscious companies such as Gap Inc. and Calvin Klein. Ross will report to Tony Fadell, who played an instrumental role in the design of Apple's iPod and now runs the smart-appliance maker Nest Labs that Google Inc. bought for \$3.2 billion last year.

Google will still sell a version of Glass to companies that have found uses for the device in their offices, stores and factories. The Mountain View, Cali-



In this Feb. 20 2013 file photo, Google co-founder Sergey Brin wears a Google Glass device in San Francisco.

fornia, company still plans to come back with a new consumer model of Glass, but hasn't set a timetable for the next release.

By the time Glass returns to the consumer market, it will face more competition from other wearable computing devices, including a line of smart watches that Apple Inc. plans to begin selling this spring.

In a Thursday blog post, Google likened the Explorer edition of Glass to an infant learning how to walk.

"Well, we still have some work to do, but now we're ready to put on our big kid shoes and learn how to run," Google said.

Glass looks like a pair of spectacles except the Explorer edition didn't contain any actual glass in the frame. Instead, the device has a thumbnail-sized screen attached above the right eye so a user can check email, see Twitter posts or get directions without having to grope for a phone.

Google began distributing the \$1,500 device to computer programmers and about 10,000 randomly selected people in 2013 with the hope that the test group would come up with new ideas for using Glass and drum up enthusiasm for a hands-free way to remain connected to the Internet.

Although it generated plenty of intrigue and publicity, Glass struggled to win widespread acceptance. Part of the aversion

stemmed from a design that made it look like a weird contraption rather than a hip accessory. Glass also turned off many people for its potential to intrude on people's privacy by secretly taking pictures or video.

"It is a perfect stalker's tool," said John Simpson, privacy project director of Consumer Watchdog, a group has been among Google's most strident critics. "It's difficult to see how they solve that."

About half of all consumers had privacy concerns about Glass, according to data compiled by Forrester Research.

The price also limited the demand for Glass when Google began selling the device to all comers last May. "Google needs to construct a consumer image for the product, and deal with privacy concerns if they want it to be mass market," said Forrester analyst J.P. Gownder.

Google hasn't disclosed how many units of the Glass' Explorer version were sold. The company says about 100 businesses, including Hewlett-Packard, Boeing and Taco Bell, are testing Glass as a tool for work. □

Associated Press

Google expects public in driverless cars in 2 to 5 years

DETROIT (AP) — The head of self-driving cars for Google expects real people to be using them on public roads in two to five years.

Chris Urmson says the cars would still be test vehicles, and Google would collect data on how they interact with other vehicles and pedestrians. Google is working on sensors to detect road signs and other vehicles, and software that analyzes all the data. The small, bulbous cars without steering wheels or pedals are being tested at a Google facility in California.

Urmson wouldn't give a date for putting driverless cars on roads en masse, saying that the system has

to be safe enough to work properly.

He told reporters Wednesday at the Automotive News World Congress in Detroit that Google doesn't know yet how it will make money on the cars.

Urmson wants to reach the point where his test team no longer has to pilot the cars. "What we really need is to get to the point where we're learning about how people interact with it, how they are using it, and how can we best bring that to market as a product that people care for," he said.

Google Inc., which is based in Mountain View, California, may face state regulatory hurdles depend-

ing on where it chooses to test the cars in public. Under legislation that Google persuaded California lawmakers to pass in 2012, self-driving cars must have a steering wheel and pedals. Several other states have passed laws formally allowing autonomous cars on public roads without that restriction.

The company in December announced that it had a fully functioning prototype that's been driving on its test track. It hoped to see the cars on the road in northern California this year, but they would have to have safety drivers and temporary manual controls.



In this photo Wednesday, May 14, 2014 file photo, a Google self-driving car is on exhibit at the Computer History Museum in Mountain View, Calif.

Associated Press

Google also confirmed that it has hired Roush Enterprises Inc., a Detroit-area company that designs and builds prototypes for the auto industry, to build

150 prototype Google autonomous cars.

Urmson said Google is making laser and other sensors for the cars smaller and less costly. □

Bank of America says earnings fall 11 percent

KEN SWEET

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Bank of America reported an 11 percent drop in fourth-quarter earnings Thursday, caused partly by the slowdown in trading revenue that has hit Wall Street. Its shares fell more than 3 percent in morning trading.

The bank earned \$3.05 billion, or 25 cents a share, for the three-month period ending in December, compared with a profit of \$3.44 billion, or 29 cents a share, a year earlier.

It had three one-time items that lowered its quarterly earnings by 7 cents a share. Those items were tied to the valuation of the bank's

debt and other underlying securities. Rival banks have also readjusted the value of similar items to deal with new accounting rules following the financial crisis.

Total revenue at Bank of America fell 12.6 percent to \$18.96 billion.

The results fell short of estimates, with analysts surveyed by FactSet expect-

ing earnings of 31 cents a share on revenue of \$21.08 billion.

Like JPMorgan Chase, who reported its results Wednesday, Bank of America reported a drop in quarterly fixed-income trading revenue to \$1.5 billion from \$19 billion a year earlier. The decline was tied to a slowdown in client trading

activity, the bank said.

For the full year, Bank of America earned \$3.79 billion, a drop from \$10.08 billion in 2013. Most of that drop in profit came from legal expenses of \$16.4 billion, primarily a result of BofA settling lawsuits and investigations into its role in the housing bubble and financial crisis. □

Disappointing bank results weigh on stock market

MATTHEW CRAFT

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Disappointing results from Bank of America and Citigroup

Weak revenue from trading pulled down Bank of America's profit 11 percent in the fourth quarter. The bank's earnings and

ing oil prices have rattled investors recently, even as the bull market for stocks closes in on its sixth anniversary.

"Bull markets don't die because of age," he said. "They die almost always in anticipation of the next recession. But where are the indications of that?"

Despite slowing growth overseas, the U.S. economy continues to improve. Last week, the government said that the unemployment rate declined to 5.6 percent in December, a six-year low. On Thursday, the New York branch of the Federal Reserve reported manufacturing expanded in the region.

"Lately, it has ... been the economy versus the markets," said Jack Ablin, the chief investment officer at BMO Private Bank. "There's a divergence. The financial markets are worried about the impact of plunging oil prices, at the same time the economic backdrop in the U.S. is improving."

On Thursday, the Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 18.60, or 0.9 percent, to close at 1,992.67. The Dow Jones industrial average dropped 106.38 points, or 0.6 percent, to 17,320.71, while the Nasdaq composite fell 68.50, or 1.5 percent,

to 4,570.82.

A volatile day of oil trading ended with crude falling \$2.23 to end at \$46.25 a barrel. Earlier in the day it jumped over \$51. Brent crude, a benchmark for international oils, fell \$1.02 to close at \$47.67 in London. Smith said he isn't troubled by the drop in oil. "Lower oil prices are good for the vast majority of the economy," he said. "It can't be bad because consumers in the U.S. and globally benefit from lower energy costs."

With JPMorgan Chase posting a drop in profits on Wednesday, the fourth-quarter earnings season has had a rough start. But that shouldn't come as a surprise. Analysts have spent the past few weeks trimming their forecasts. They now predict big corporations will report earnings growth of 4 percent, according to S&P Capital IQ, down from forecasts of 6.6 percent on December 1. Overall sales are expected to rise just 2.1 percent, largely the result of sliding revenue for oil companies. □



Trader Gregory Rowe wipes his forehead as he works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. Disappointing results from Bank of America and Citigroup tugged the stock market to its fifth straight loss Thursday. (AP Photo/Richard Drew)

tugged the stock market to its fifth straight loss Thursday.

Oil prices continued their slide, and U.S. government bonds jumped.

revenue fell short of Wall Street's estimates. BofA's stock sank 84 cents, or 5 percent, to \$15.20.

Discouraging news on the global economy and fall-

The stock market's fall is likely to prove temporary, another pause in a long climb higher, said Henry Smith, chief investment officer at Haverford Trust.

Citigroup says fourth-quarter profit dropped on legal costs

STEVE ROTHWELL

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Citigroup said Thursday that its fourth-quarter profit dropped 86 percent after incurring large legal and restructuring charges.

The bank earned \$350 million, or 6 cents a share, for the three-month period ending in December, compared with a profit of \$2.5 billion, or 0.77 cents a share, for the same period

a year ago.

Revenue was flat at \$17.78 billion.

The bank warned investors that it would incur charges of \$3.5 billion in the fourth quarter to cover the costs associated with investigations into currency trading, the manipulation of a key interest rate, as well as anti-money laundering and related probes. Money was also set aside to cover costs associated

with reducing the Citi's headcount and cutting its real-estate holdings.

Like JPMorgan Chase and Bank of America, Citi also reported a drop in quarterly fixed-income trading revenue. Citi said that revenue in that part of its business fell to \$2 billion in the period, a drop of 16 percent from a year earlier, due to a "challenging" economic environment.

Financial markets were

volatile in the final quarter of last year. There were big swings in bond and stock prices as investors worried about the outlook for global economic growth.

"When you get these sudden swings, people don't know what to do and activity just stops," John Gerspach, Citi's chief financial officer, said on a call with reporters. "That's what's causing a lot of the volatile results that you're see-

ing."

Citi's earnings fell short of analysts' estimate of 10 cents a share, according to the financial data provider FactSet.

For the full year, Citi earned \$7.3 billion, a drop of 47 percent compared with earnings of \$13.7 billion a year earlier.

Citi fell 99 cents, or 2 percent, \$48.10. The company's stock is down 11.2 percent this year. □

The Child in the Basement



DAVID BROOKS
© 2015 New York Times

Maybe you're familiar with Ursula Le Guin's short story, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas." It's about a sweet and peaceful city with lovely parks and delightful music. The people in the city are genuinely happy. They enjoy their handsome buildings and a "magnificent" farmers' market. Le Guin describes a festival day with delicious beer and horse races: "An old woman, small, fat, and laughing, is passing out flowers from a basket, and tall young men wear her flowers in their shining hair. A child of nine or ten sits at the edge of the crowd, alone, playing on a wooden flute."

It is an idyllic, magical place. But then Le Guin describes one more feature of Omelas. In the basement of one of the buildings, there is a small broom-closet-sized room with a locked door and no windows. A small child is locked inside the room. It looks about 6, but, actually, the child is nearly 10. "It is feeble-minded. Perhaps it was born defective, or perhaps it has become imbecile through fear, malnutrition and neglect."

Occasionally, the door opens and people look in. The child used to cry out, "Please let me out. I will be good!" But the people never answered and now the child just whimpers. It is terribly thin, lives on a half-bowl of cornmeal a day and must sit in its own excrement.

"They all know it is there, all the people of Omelas," Le Guin writes. "Some of them have come to see it; others are content merely to know it is there. They all know it has to be there. Some of them understand why, and some do not, but they all understand that their happiness, the beauty of their city, the tenderness of their friendships, the health of their children ... depend wholly on this child's abominable misery."

That is the social contract in Omelas. One child suffers horribly so that the rest can be happy. If the child were let free or comforted, Omelas would be destroyed. Most people feel horrible for the child, and some parents hold their kids tighter, and then they

return to their happiness.

But some go to see the child in the room and then keep walking. They don't want to be part of that social contract. "They leave Omelas; they walk ahead into the darkness and they do not come back."

In one reading this is a parable about exploitation. According to this reading, many of us live in societies whose prosperity depends on some faraway child in the basement. When we buy a cellphone or a piece of cheap clothing, there is some exploited worker - a child in the basement. We tolerate exploitation, telling each other that their misery is necessary for overall affluence, though maybe it's not.

In another reading, the story is a challenge to the utilitarian mindset so prevalent today.

In theory, most of us subscribe to a set of values based on the idea that a human being is an end not a means. You can't justifiably use a human being as an object. It is wrong to enslave a person, even if that slavery might produce a large good. It is wrong to kill a person for his organs, even if many lives might be saved.

And yet we don't actually live according to that moral imperative. Life is filled with tragic trade-offs. In many different venues, the suffering of the few is justified by those trying to deliver the greatest good for the greatest number.

Companies succeed because they fire people, even if a whole family depends on them. Schools become prestigious because they reject people - even if they put a lifetime of work into their application. Leaders fighting a war on terror accidentally kill innocents. These are children in the basement of our survival and happiness.

The story compels readers to ask if they are willing to live according to those contracts. Some are not. They walk away from prosperity, and they make some radical commitment. They would rather work toward some inner purity.

The rest of us live with the trade-offs. The story reminds us of the inner numbing this creates. The people who stay in Omelas aren't bad; they just find it easier and easier to live with the misery they depend upon. I've found that this story rivets people because it confronts them with all the tragic compromises built into modern life - all the children in the basements - and, at the same time, it elicits some desire to struggle against bland acceptance of it all.

In another reading, the whole city of Omelas is just different pieces of one person's psychology, a person living in the busy modern world, and that person's idealism and moral sensitivity is the shriveling child locked in the basement.



We Need Another Giant Protest



THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN
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President Barack Obama was criticized for failing to attend, or send a proper surrogate to, the giant anti-terrorism march in Paris on Sunday. That criticism was right. But it is typical of American politics today that we focus on this and not what would have really made the world feel the jihadist threat was finally being seriously confronted. And that would not be a march that our president helps to lead, but one in which he's not involved at all. That would be a million-person march against the jihadists across the Arab-Muslim world, organized by Arabs and Muslims for Arabs and Muslims, without anyone in the West asking for it - not just because of what happened in Paris but because of the scores of Muslims recently murdered by jihadists in Pakistan, Yemen, Iraq, Libya, Nigeria and Syria.

Abdul Rahman al-Rashed, one of the most respected Arab journalists, wrote Monday in his column in Al-Sharq Al-Awsat: "Protests against the recent terrorist attacks in France should have been held in Muslim capitals, rather than Paris, because, in this case, it is Muslims who are involved in this crisis and stand accused. ... The story of extremism begins in Muslim societies, and it is with their support and silence that extremism has grown into terrorism that is harming people. It is of no value that the French people, who are the victims here, take to the streets. ... What

is required here is for Muslim communities to disown the Paris crime and Islamic extremism in general." (Translation by Memri.org.) The truth is there is a huge amount of ambivalence toward this whole jihadist phenomenon - more than any of us would like to believe - in the Arab-Muslim world, Europe and America. This ambivalence starts in the Muslim community, where there is a deep cleavage over what constitutes authentic Islam today. We fool ourselves when we tell Muslims what "real Islam" is. Because Islam has no Vatican, no single source of religious authority, there are many Islams today. The puritanical Wahhabi/Salafi/jihadist strain is one of them, and it has more support than we want to believe.

Ambivalence runs through Europe today on the question of what a country should demand of new Muslim immigrants by way of adopting its values. Is Stratfor's George Friedman right when he argues that Europeans adopted multiculturalism precisely because they didn't really want to absorb their Muslim immigrants, and many of those Muslim immigrants, who went to Europe to find a job, not a new identity, didn't want to be absorbed? If so, that spells trouble.

Ambivalence runs through Washington's ties with Saudi Arabia. Ever since jihadists took over Islam's holiest shrine in Mecca in 1979, proclaiming that Saudi Arabia's rulers were not pious enough, Saudi Arabia has redoubled its commitment to Wahhabi or Salafist Islam - the most puritanical, anti-pluralistic and anti-women version of that faith. This Saudi right turn - combined with oil revenues used to build Wahhabi-inspired mosques, websites and madrassas across the Muslim world - has tilted the entire Sunni community to the right. Look at a picture of female graduates of Cairo University in 1950. Few are wearing veils. Look at them today. Many are wearing veils. The open, soft, embracing Islam that

defined Egypt for centuries - pray five times a day but wash it down with a beer at night - has been hardened by this Wahhabi wind from Arabia.

But U.S. presidents never confront Saudi Arabia about this because of our oil addiction. As I've said, addicts never tell the truth to their pushers. The Saudi government opposes the jihadists. Unfortunately, though, it's a very short step from Wahhabi Islam to the violent jihadism practiced by the Islamic State. The French terrorists were born in France but were marinated in Wahhabi-Salafi thought through the Web and local mosques - not Voltaire.

Also, the other civil war in Islam - between Sunnis and Shiites - has led many mainstream Sunni charities, mosques and regimes to support jihadist groups because they're ferocious fighters against Shiites. Finally - yet more ambivalence - for 60 years there was a tacit alliance between Arab dictators and their Sunni religious clergy. The regimes funded these uninspired Muslim clerics, and these clergy blessed the uninspired dictators - and both stifled the emergence of any authentic, inspired, reformist Islam that could take on Wahhabism-Salafism, even though many Muslims wanted it. An authentic reformation requires a free space in the Arab-Muslim world.

"Muslims need to 'upgrade their software,' which is programmed mainly by our schools, television and mosques - especially small mosques that trade in what is forbidden," Egyptian intellectual Mamoun Fandy wrote in Al-Sharq Al-Awsat. (Also translated by Memri.org.) "There is no choice but to dismantle this system and rebuild it in a way that is compatible with human culture and values."

In short, jihadist zeal is easy to condemn, but will require multiple revolutions to stem - revolutions that will require a lot of people in the Arab-Muslim world and West to shed their ambivalence and stop playing double games.

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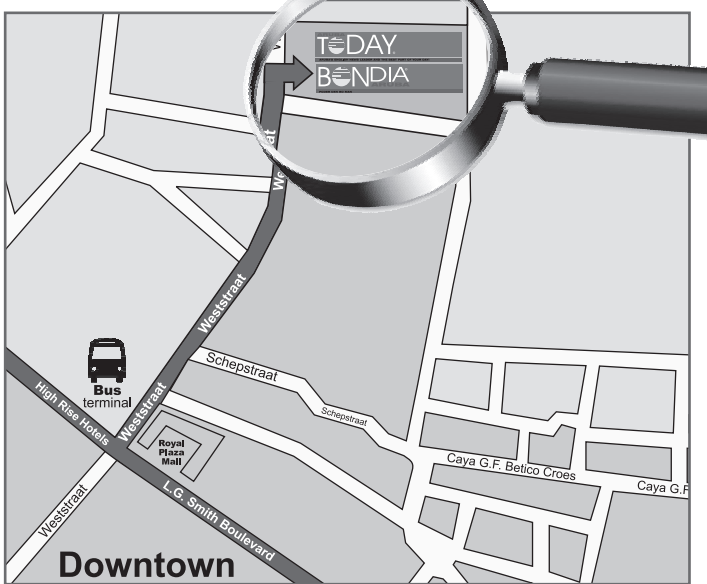
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U.S. science panel: no alternative to bulk collection

KEN DILANIAN

AP Intelligence Writer

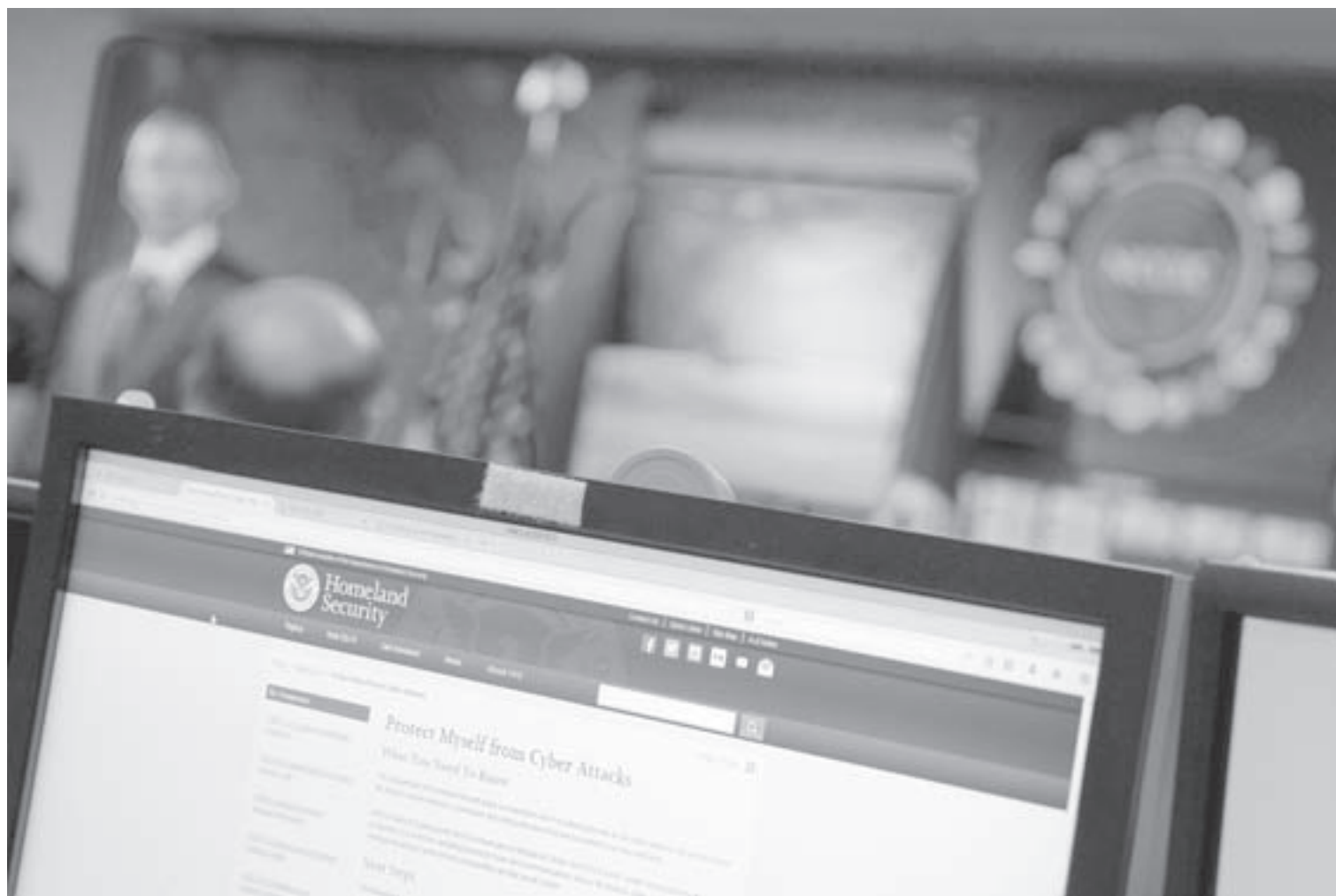
WASHINGTON (AP) — A

committee of U.S. scientific experts has concluded that there is no viable technological alternative to bulk collection of data by the National Security Agency that allows analysts access to communications whose significance only becomes clear years later.

An 85-page report by the National Research Council, commissioned last year in the wake of surveillance revelations by former NSA contractor Edward Snowden, did not take a position on the merits of bulk collection of telephone or other records. But asked to look for effective software alternatives to bulk collection, it concluded there weren't any, in cases when, for example, the NSA wants to examine the past communications of new terror suspects.

"Restricting bulk collection will make intelligence less effective, and technology cannot do anything about this," the report says. "Whether the gain in privacy is worth the loss is a policy question that the committee does not address." If a particular set of communications becomes significant,

the report says, "because of new circumstances such as identifying a new target, a non-nuclear nation that is now pursuing the development of nuclear weapons, an individual that is found to be a terrorist, or new intelligence-gathering priorities, historical events and the data they provide will be available for analysis only if they were previously collected." The report does suggest ways to mitigate the privacy im-



A view of a computer screen is seen as President Barack Obama speaks at the National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center in Arlington, Va., Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2015. Obama renewed his call for Congress to pass cybersecurity legislation, including a proposal that encourages companies to share threat information with the government and protects them from potential lawsuits if they do.

pact of bulk collection by restricting use of the data, something NSA says it does. "Although no software can fully replace bulk with targeted information collection, software can be developed to more effectively target collection and to control the usage of collected data," the report says.

It recommends the use of automatic controls on bulk data, with audits that can be publicly shared.

The study was conducted by a committee of the National Academies, which advises the government on scientific matters. The committee was chaired by Robert Sproull, a former Oracle execu-

tive and computer scientist now at the University of Massachusetts.

The committee included a variety of experts, including Michael Leiter, former director of the National Counter Terrorism Center. It sent drafts of the study to a variety of reviewers, including Fred Cate, a law professor and privacy expert at Indiana University, who criticized its approach in an email to The Associated Press.

"The study seemed set up to fail," Cate said. "It imposes an impossibly high standard—to find a technological tool that is even better than having access to bulk collection. It seemed clear from the

outset that the answer is no." But that's not the right question, Cate said, because the so-called 215 Program scrutinized has not been shown to be necessary or effective in stopping terror plots.

Arguably the most controversial example of bulk data collection is the NSA's gathering and storing of American calling records, a program kept secret for years and disclosed by Snowden.

President Barack Obama has proposed ending government storage of those records and requiring the NSA to gather them as needed from the telecommunications companies, but Congress has not ad-

opted the proposal, so the collection continues.

The program, conducted under Section 215 of the Patriot Act, collects the "to and from" information of most domestic landline calls, but not the content of the communications. It does not gather most cell phone calls for logistical and other reasons, officials have said.

Officials say the records are searched against known terrorist phone numbers a limited number of times per year, based on a judicial finding of reasonable suspicion, to probe possible links between terror suspects. Only a few dozen people in the government have access to the database. □

Associated Press

Nicole Kidman shows her silly side in 'Paddington'

LINDSEY BAHR
AP Film Writer

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)

— Nicole Kidman knows most people don't consider her a comedic actress.

In her 31-year career, her roles have ranged from the morose to the deliciously sadistic. There are a few straight comedies in her resume, but Kidman is the first to admit that she just doesn't get many offers to do that type of work. She's won an Oscar. She's worked with Stanley Kubrick, Jane Campion, and Lars Von Trier. So how did she end up in a modest role as a delightfully villainous taxidermist in the children's film "Paddington" with a relatively unknown director at the helm?

The answer is simple: She was asked.

"The desire to run the gamut and be diverse is something you're taught at drama school," said Kidman on a recent afternoon at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel. "We're trained in Shakespeare and then we're trained in Noël Coward and we're trained in mime classes. But a lot of times you're not given the opportunity to explore the things that you've cultivated."

For director Paul King, it was a no-brainer. But it wasn't Kidman's 1996 romantic fantasy romp "Practical Magic" that he was thinking of. He'd seen Gus Van Sant's "To Die For" and knew Kidman had to be his Millicent.

In the film, out Friday, Millicent is a leather-clad, stiletto-wearing femme fatale who will stop at nothing to stuff the iconic talking bear from Darkest Peru and put him in a museum.

"He wrote it for me. I'm not sure if that's a flattering thing or not," Kidman laughed.

King, who had mostly

worked in British television, knew it was a long shot.

"You should never write for an actor because they'll just say no. But I did have her in mind," he said.

The hard part was convincing everyone to actually put the script in front of Kidman. As King describes it, it's a process of being politely insistent.

Despite all the warnings that Kidman was "never" going to say yes, as soon as she heard the name "Paddington," she jumped. Kidman had grown up reading Michael Bond's books in Australia and it just struck a nerve.

Ultimately, King said, she was the easiest person to cast. She signed on in just 12 hours.

"You don't often see the silly side of Nicole and she's such a funny, easygoing person," said King, who really put the actress to the test. On day one, she was hanging upside down on wires and it just got more challenging from there.

"I hope it gets a good response. It's smart," said Kidman of the movie, excitedly talking about how the physical comedy of the CG bear makes her two young daughters "squeal with laughter."

Taken alongside a recent segment on "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon," where Kidman charmingly revealed that the host had missed an opportunity to date her years ago (the YouTube video has over 19 million views to date), it might seem as though the actress who once urinated on Zac Efron for a role, is in a new phase of her career.

The past year was not exactly a stellar one for the Oscar-winner either, with middling limited releases like the thriller



In this Sat., Jan. 10, 2015 file photo, Nicole Kidman, left and Paddington Bear arrive at the Los Angeles Premiere of Paddington at the TCL Chinese Theatre, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

"Before I Go To Sleep" and the historical drama "The Railway Man," and the mysterious non-release of "Grace of Monaco" in the United States.

"It's sad," said Kidman of the Grace Kelly drama. "I put so much work into it. I would have loved for it to have been em-

braced."

But Kidman insists that she's "not the actor who makes strategic choices. If you look at my career, it's pretty random." Even the Fallon bit was "so not planned."

Still, she is taking the reins where she can. Kidman and Reese Witherspoon optioned the rights to

the book "Big Little Lies," which is in development as a limited series. She's also starring in and producing the adaptation of the quirky novel "The Family Fang."

"My life is a roller coaster. My career is a roller coaster. Some people get smooth sailing. I never get that," she said. □

Mariah Carey to launch Las Vegas shows in May



In this Dec. 3, 2014 file photo, Mariah Carey performs at the 82nd Annual Rockefeller Center Christmas tree lighting ceremony in New York.

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Pop icon Mariah Carey will open a series of shows May 16 at The Colosseum in Las Ve-

gas.

Caesars Palace and Carey have announced 18 performances, so far.

The show, dubbed "MARIAH CAREY #1s," will feature the singer performing her 18 No. 1 singles, which includes "We Belong Together," "Hero" and "Vision of Love."

Carey's announcement comes after company lawyers said Wednesday that a division of financially troubled Caesars Entertainment Corp. will head to court in Chicago on Thursday to file for bankruptcy protection.

Tickets for Carey's show range from \$55 to \$250.

Carey, 44, is following in the steps of Britney Spears, Celine Dion and Shania Twain, who have performed their worldwide hits at Vegas residences. □

New Discovery Life channel seeks relatable stories

DAVID BAUDER
AP Television Writer

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) — Discovery Communications executives thought of Facebook when considering what the new Discovery Life network would be about. Specifically, all of the Facebook friends who write about their fabulous jobs, fabulous families and fabulous vacations. "We think the interesting things happen between the Facebook posts," said Jane Latman, general manager of Discovery Life. Discovery Life switched on Thursday on cable and satellite systems. The connective thread behind its nonfiction programming is what happens when life throws you a curveball, she said.

The new network replaces the Discovery Fit & Health network, which has shut down. Nothing against fitness and health, but the bottom-line focused Discovery folks found that people who wanted information about those topics tended to turn to the Internet instead of a television network.

"We are opening the doors wider," Latman said. "It gives us the opportunity for more breadth on the network and removes the

barrier that Discovery Fit & Health had become — a sort of 'eat your broccoli' network." Discovery has specialized in such repurposing. Since

Latman works with Henry Schlieff running ID and is bringing the same flair for eye-catching show titles and programming ideas to Discovery Life.

is about new parents whose babies arrive under unusual circumstances — during a hurricane, at a wedding or on the cab on the way to the hospital.

A couple of hospital tales, "Untold Stories of the ER" and "NY ER," will survive from Discovery Fit & Health.

On April 2, Discovery Life will debut "New Girls on the Block," about some transgender women living in Kansas City, Missouri, home of the Transgender Institute. Their curveball? They were born into bodies in which they were uncomfortable.

"We've got amazing characters," said Jay James, executive producer at Conveyer Media, which is making the show. "We've got really compelling stories, and we have a really interesting world that hasn't been explored on television ... I mean, we've never really seen a group of transgender friends just sitting around in a coffee shop having coffee."

Latman said she's looking for stories that people can identify with on the network, even as they explore worlds they are not used to. Discovery Life is betting that people are getting tired of "reality" shows with manufactured situations. "These people are relatable," she said. "You're not pointing to them and saying, 'This is a freak show.'" □



This photo provided by Discovery Life Channel shows Jaimie, left, helping AiYana pick a dress for Macy's stepping out party in a scene from "New Girls on the Block."

Associated Press

2011 alone, it has shut malingering networks to create Oprah Winfrey's OWN, Destination America, Velocity, Discovery Family and the American Heroes Channel. The most successful has been Investigation Discovery, which replaced the Discovery Times Channel in 2008.

Take the new series premiering Thursday with Irish daredevil Baz Ashmawy, who brings his 70-year-old mother along on some adventures like skydiving and alligator wrestling. Its title? "50 Ways to Kill Your Mother."

The new "Outrageous Births: Tales From the Crib"

Author and parenting expert Lenore Skenazy, once criticized publicly for allowing her 9-year-old son to take the New York City subway alone, turns the tables with stories about overprotective parents on "World's Worst Mom." The series "The Mistress" tells stories of Other Women.



Movie director Peter Jackson talks to reporters at an event to promote the New Zealand film industry on Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2015, in Wellington, New Zealand.

Associated Press

NICK PERRY
Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — Director Peter Jackson said Wednesday he's putting his energy into helping launch a museum to commemorate World War I after finishing

his "Hobbit" movie trilogy. If he has any plans for future blockbusters, he's not saying.

Jackson was speaking at his New Zealand post-production facility where he was helping host an event to promote the lo-

Peter Jackson helping to open WWI museum after 'Hobbit' wrap

cal film industry. Directors Jane Campion and James Cameron also attended. Jackson is a World War I history buff who owns a number of planes from the era.

He said the plan for the Wellington museum was to open during April to mark the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli battle.

He said more galleries would be opened over the coming four years to mark other battles in which New Zealanders fought.

The New Zealand Herald newspaper reported earlier that Jackson had been recruited by the government to curate the muse-

um, and he was expected to gather aircraft, tanks and other artifacts from private and public collections.

"That's where most of my time is now, which is good," Jackson said Wednesday. "It's fun. And it's free. The exhibits will be very, very interesting, and I'm enjoying it."

Jackson said he was also enjoying getting some rest after finishing the "Hobbit" — although he wasn't entirely done, because he was still working on an extended version for DVD release.

But he said he was happy to take a break from new

film projects for a while.

"It's the first time in five years that I haven't woken up in the morning and had deadlines" he said. "... no phones ringing, screaming 'When are we going to see this? When are we going to do that?' And I'd forgotten what that's like. So I'll let that last for a little bit longer before I destroy it." The trilogy finale, "The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies," has so far earned \$783 million in the U.S. and around the world after opening in most places in mid-December. To date, the trilogy has earned a total \$2.76 billion at the box office. □

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